

THE MIDLOTHIAN MIRROR

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Dear Lillian and Harold,

Really, Harold, you are the best damn guy to write to your friends. I don't see how you do it, but it's wonderful. I get ashamed of myself, and since Penn never gets ashamed about anything I have to be ashamed for him too.

Your letters are always so lively and interesting. And of course the letter I had from Lillian was beautiful.... I get up early too - sometimes I work from 5:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. In the great part, doing reading for Penn that he simply doesn't have time to do.... But I never get ANYTHING done... Bound to be something wrong with my system.

Re-reading your letter: No, there's nothing naive about you. I think these people turn to you, and want to communicate with you, because you project a quality of honesty. Glad things are breaking so well for you... Don't you think most of us have a built-in disinclination to talk freely with the fuzz? And that's too bad.

Neither one of us knows anything about "the fellow responsible for that obscenity with Reagan and the homosexuals." All that we have read is about Reagan's press secretary talking to reporters (off the record? off the cuff?) on The Cruise.

Good Gracious, you certainly have been getting around and into such a lot of happenings. That's great.

About Sylvia: After I read her book, I wrote her and expressed tremendous admiration for her accomplishment. Because I really felt this and wanted to tell her. She wrote me a very sweet note, most appreciative. She knew I meant it, and wasn't just buttering her up.

I do feel - but of course I didn't say this - that Sylvia sacrificed the "element of time" - her book would have been a super-blockbuster a year ago - for polish, triple-checked accuracy, and a high quality of

* most people, I mean -

writing. You, Penn and some of the other critics might find inaccuracies, because you have much greater knowledge about the whole subject than I do. *But I found none.*

I did a lot of jumping around in Sylvia's book (reading it all, but not in page order) and I used the index a lot. Do I remember correctly that the index refers to you once or twice when you do not appear on that particular page? And that other page numbers referring to you are correct? I could be mistaken. I've read such a mountain of stuff.

Of course I can't go along with her interpretation of Garrison. But that's just the way she feels and obviously she's not going to budge.

It seems to me that the writing of each of the critics is bound to reflect in some way their personal happiness, their normalcy, their sense of achievement or non-achievement, their whole personality, in fact. (If this is true, then of course it is true of all authors.) But more especially, the picture of the critic is reflected sharply in their letters to each other.

Now this analysis is trite and not expressed very well. But I think that you and Maggie especially come across as well-rounded people. And I don't say that Sylvia doesn't come across like that. But one senses a loneliness there, or so it seems to me... Too, Sylvia has been divorced which is bound to leave some scars, and her health is far from ideal.

The TMO "Garrison and Warren" blast at some of the Garrison supporters is incredibly revealing. And if Sylvia said she didn't write it, I believe her. Arnoni honestly and actually could have picked up her thoughts and ideas by osmosis. He could. He really could.

Well, Old Buddy, this seems to have turned into an intensely personal letter. And I know you'll so regard it.

With friendship,

R.A.